IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1 and 20 and cancel claims 17 and 18 as follows.

1. (Currently amended) A securing apparatus, comprising:

a deformable body, wherein the body is configured to provide a secure interference fit with at least one article to which it is fitted, and

an aperture within the body, wherein the aperture is configured to accept a releasing tool,

wherein the securing apparatus is only unlocked by the operation of the releasing tool with respect to the body and remains locked at all other times, where the securing apparatus is fully unlocked by the operation of the releasing tool with respect to the body and is locked at all other times upon removal of the releasing tool.

2. (Withdrawn) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the body is permanently fixed to part of an article.

3. (Withdrawn) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the body is fitted to an article that is adjustable in length.

4. (Previously presented) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the body joins a plurality of articles together.

5.   (Previously presented)   A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the body contains at least one slot that is substantially perpendicular to the aperture and which bisects at least one side of the aperture.

6.   (Withdrawn) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 5 wherein the slot is terminated by a stress reduction device such as a substantially circular hole.

7.   (Previously presented)   A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the body contains a plurality of apertures.

8.   (Original)   A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 7 wherein the securing apparatus is configured to secure a plurality of articles, each of which can be released individually.

9.   (Previously presented)   A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the securing apparatus is configured so that the absence of the releasing tool from the aperture ensures that the securing device is in a locked position by default.

10. (Previously presented) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the dimensions of the body of the securing device when the releasing tool is not operated are such that the securing apparatus cannot be connected to the article to which it is to be secured.

11. (Withdrawn) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the securing apparatus is constructed as part of an article to which at least one other article is able to be secured.

12. (Previously presented) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the body is configured to include at least one seal that itself is configured to stop any leakage of material from within a secured article.

13. (Withdrawn) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the internal shape of the body is non-circular.

14. (Withdrawn) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 13 wherein the internal shape of the body is oval.

15. (Previously presented) A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least one article to be secured is tubular.

16.   (Previously presented)   A securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least one article to be secured is solid.

17.   (Canceled)

18.   (Canceled)

19.   (Withdrawn) A releasing tool for a securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the releasing tool includes a non-circular section.

20.   (Currently Amended)   A ~~releasing tool for a~~ securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the releasing tool contains a threaded section that is configured so that the securing apparatus is unlocked by inserting the releasing tool into a complementary threaded area of the securing apparatus, to a point where the required widening of an area of the aperture is achieved.

21.   (Withdrawn) A releasing tool for securing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the releasing tool contains a non-uniform section that is configured so that the insertion of the releasing tool within the aperture will cause the aperture to spread to a point where the required widening of an area of the aperture is achieved.

22.   (Cancelled)

23.   (Cancelled)

24.   (Cancelled)